

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants are appreciative of the allowance of Claims 39, 40, 42, and 44, and of the indication of allowability of Claims 27 and 29-33.

Claim 24 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable Claim 27, which is now cancelled. It is believed that this puts Claim 24 into a condition for allowance. While this response is an amendment under Rule 116, it is believed to expedite allowance of this application and to remove issues for any appeal. It is also believed that this amendment is suggested by the indication of allowability of Claim 27, and therefore, it should be entered.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 26, 28, 34-37, and 38 have been rejected as unpatentable over Bi et al. (WO 96/034314). This rejection is traversed, but in order to expedite prosecution, Claim 24 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of cancelled Claim 27.

Rejected Claims 24, 26, 28, and 34-38 have been cancelled to remove them from consideration at this time, but Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the subject matter of these claims in future continuation applications if they so choose.

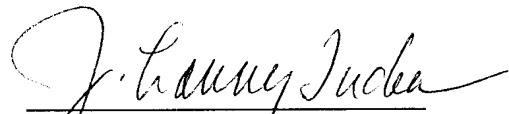
In view of these amendments, it is believed that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112(2)

Claims 41 and 43 have been rejected as being indefinite for lack of definition as to the application of the layer in step (d). Claim 41 has been amended to clarify this feature and therefore the rejection should be withdrawn for both claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested. A prompt and favorable action by the examiner is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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